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tributions are made to the controversy between the *Realschulen* and the *Gymnasien*, and the principle of elective instead of obligatory courses is urged as a desirable reform. Judicious comments are passed upon the tendency at some German Universities to treat the modern as well as the ancient languages from the standpoint of a theoretical science. "Nothing can be *universitätsfähig*," exclaims sarcastically an opponent of this tendency, "which is not at least four hundred years old." And so Prof. Schmeding fears that the study of the modern languages may fail of becoming the means of learning the thoughts of the best and noblest men of foreign nations, of penetrating into their mental processes and their peculiar conceptions of life in order to appropriate and utilize all that is finest therein. And yet one cannot but feel the fascination of the examination of those exceedingly important adjuncts of language training comprised under the rubrics of phonetics and comparative philology; and although American scholars too are concerned themselves much with grammatical and linguistic subjects, perhaps the only caution needful may be the claim that the field of literary history and criticism is equally arduous, equally exacting, demanding peradventure for finished culture in the teacher an even longer period of apprenticeship, and that it is equally fruitful in valuable results.

In Prof. Schmeding's vision of the future the time will come when Greek and Latin will occupy in general culture the position now held by Persian, Hebrew and Chinese. Then will the great officials and judges of the land gain their high positions without classical culture, and the warfare of to-day over the comparative merits of our various educational systems will seem an almost incredible echo from a remote past. The approach of this time Prof. Schmeding desires to hasten, but not unduly, in order that:

" * * * * the change which comes be free
To ingroove itself with that which flies."

Signs of such a change are appearing already in Germany as a partial result of the sharp discussions which the two decades just past have witnessed. In this country, where few American youth are often accused of possessing too classical an equipment, where the

requirements for admission to the learned professions are generally so lenient, and where the scientific wolf even threatens at times absolutely to devour the classical lamb, such a debate need become neither so acrimonious nor so prolonged. Waiving a decision upon many of these debatable points, points which only future experiments can settle, the fair demand of the times is for an equal opportunity and equal facilities for the pursuit of both ancient and modern languages. Under such an arrangement, which already prevails in some of our higher institutions, it is only incumbent upon the teachers of modern languages to endeavor to invest their courses with the same thoroughness of preparation and carefulness in detail which we have been accustomed to see applied to the study of Greek and Latin. The feigned aristocracy of the classics will then give way to a more democratic equality of ancient and modern tongues, the contest will resolve itself into a friendly rivalry, and the issue may be left to take care of itself.

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Victor Hugo. By ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE. New York, Worthington & Co., 1886, 12mo., 200 pp., \$1.25.

Swinburne's latest tribute to Hugo's genius, as was to be expected from his previous utterances, is little less than an apotheosis of the great French poet, and will, on account of the clear note it strikes, always hold a conspicuous place among contemporary criticisms. So genuine and sincere, so fervent, devout and ecstatic is his admiration, so emphatic and pronounced is his panegyric that it cannot fail to startle many a hostile critic of Hugo's muse and to induce him to reconsider his conclusions.

To Swinburne, V. Hugo is not only "the greatest Frenchman of all time," but "the greatest man the world has seen since Shakespeare;" nay, we cannot help reading between the lines that he even prefers him to the latter; when we meet with such expressions on Hugo as: "this incomparable master—the greatest of all his kind—the highest among poets—the one only master of all forms and kinds of poetry—the master of masters," whose

"spiritual service has been in its inmost essence, in its highest development, the service of a healer and a comforter, the work of a redeemer and a prophet," and who "above all other apostles who have brought us each the glad tidings of his peculiar gospel . . . has deserved to be called by the most beautiful and tender of all human titles—the son of consolation."

Our critic expects his judgment to be received with irritation and derision, but he prefers this danger rather than that of incurring the smile of compassion or the scorn of posterity, by reason of "faint praise."

It is greatly to be regretted that Swinburne, in writing on Hugo, should not have given us more than a small volume of 200 pages, which under any circumstances must needs be wholly inadequate to meet the expectations aroused by the tenor of its title. He who expects to find in it a clear-cut profile of Hugo as a person, or a comprehensive idea of him as a man, or an analysis of his works, or an account of his life, or a description of the mental and moral atmosphere in which he grew up, and similar topics, will be disappointed. Indeed, all Swinburne does is to accompany the reader through the vast realm of Hugo's creations, and to point out to him what he considers the greatest and most worthy of attention. Even this service, however, is a valuable one and to be received with gratitude, because the critic is nearly always fortunate in knowing where to linger. It is true, we cannot share his predilection for *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*, nor his high praise of *L'Homme qui rit*; we also hesitate to proclaim *Le Roi s'amuse* "one of the great crowning tragedies of all time," but we heartily endorse his poetic selections, although we miss in his list such poems as *Encore à Toi—Quand l'enfant paraît—Oh! n'insultez pas une femme qui tombe!—Au Bord de la Mer—A quoi je songe—Le Pont—Androclos—La Conscience—Le Parricide—Le Temple*, and others.

With reference to the 'Légende des Siècles,' we read:—"The unity of the book," "is not logical but spiritual; its diversity is not accidental or chaotic; it is the result and expression of a spontaneous and perfect harmony, as clear and as profound as that of the other greatest works achieved by man." If we may be permitted to express a wish, it is to see Swin-

burne grapple with this greatest problem set before the student of Victor Hugo; namely, to demonstrate the unity of the 'Légende des Siècles.'

H. C. O. Huss.

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PERSONAL.

W. C. Collar, Head Master of the Roxbury Latin School, is preparing for Ginn & Co. a revised edition of Eysenbach's German Grammar. It will be ready in the autumn.

The 'History of Education' (cf. *Notes*, No. 2, col. 53) by F. V. N. Painter, Professor of Modern Languages in Roanoke College, has received warm commendation from Dr. Wm. T. Harris, Editor of the 'International Education Series,' where it will appear. He says of the work: "I was delighted to find in the MS. what I had been seeking for years, an admirable study of the History of Education from the standpoint of the philosophy of history (Hegel's as modified by Rosenkranz and then by Karl Schmidt)."

Walter D. Toy, A. M. (University of Virginia, 1882), has been appointed to the professorship of German and French in the University of North Carolina, at Chapel Hill. During his course of study at the University of Virginia, Prof. Toy was engaged from time to time in teaching in Mr. McCabe's school, at Petersburg, Va., making in all about four years, but immediately after obtaining the Master's degree he went abroad, where he devoted himself especially to the study of modern languages. He passed five semesters at the Universities of Leipsic and Berlin and one semester at the Sorbonne and Collège de France.

Samuel B. Platner, a graduate (1883) of Yale College, was appointed Instructor in Latin and French, at Adelbert College, Cleveland, Ohio, at the beginning of the present academic year. Mr. Platner spent two years of graduate study at his Alma Mater, as incumbent of the Larned Scholarship, and took his Ph. D. degree (1885) at the same institution, with Sanskrit as his principal subject and Greek and Latin as secondary subjects. He presented a thesis on a "Comparison of Three Recensions of the Rāmāyana"